The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accounts and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor according to the labor's total, legislative, and judicial fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR
WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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LABOR'S GOAL! To Repeal Taft-Hartley Law

WHOLE NO. 1928 | WILLIAM GREEN, President | WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, MARCH 23, 1948 | GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer | VOL. 38, NO. 12

AFL Pledges Help for Enslaved Czechs; Woll Warns of Peril to All Free People

New York.—The American Federation of Labor pledged vigorous efforts to aid the workers of Czechoslovakia and rallied upon free peoples and free trade unions everywhere "to join hands to halt the onrushing tide of Communist totalitarian tyranny."

In a ringing statement denouncing the Communist coup in Czechoslovakia, Matthew Woll, AFL executive council member and chairman of its international relations department, warned that Soviet Russia's action in wiping out the freedom of the Czechs "is a portent of what is in store for other lands" if the power-mad rulers of the Russian slave empire are not checked.

Mr. Woll declared the overthrow of the former Prague government by which through fear was loyal to Russia "is a warning that the Kremlin is frantically and fanatically preparing a military attack against the democratic peoples of the West." He said:

"Clearly, if the Russian dictators had peaceful and not aggressive military intentions, they would not have ordered their Fifth Column, the Communist Party, to seize Czechoslovakia, to wipe out all the democratic institutions, and brutally purge the land of all freedom-loving forces."

Tracing the pattern and methods used by the Russian agents in effecting their coup, the statement said:

"The tragedy of Czechoslovakia is a grim warning to the working people of all free lands. The main weapons used by Russia's Fifth Column were the police and trade unions. From the moment the democratic forces allowed the Communists to infiltrate and dominate these vital political and economic agencies, they sowed the seeds of the destruction of their country's free institutions and national independence. Once the Communists in any nation use the unions and get control of the police, all freedom is lost. Not even the healthiest instincts of liberty and the strongest of democratic traditions can serve as a bulwark against the Communists attacking with these weapons.

"Having turned the trade unions and the police into departments of the Communist Party, the Soviet's Fifth Columnists proceeded to organize the so-called action committees to factories and the people on the streets of Czechoslovakia on call. These action committees—squads of armed Communist gangsters—forthwith on about to usurp the functions of the unions, to seize the offices of rival parties, and to subvert all legally constituted authorities by brutally imposing their will on the people. Thus was the government chosen by the people replaced with a terrorist dictatorship manipulated by and subservient to the ruthless hierarchy in the Kremlin.

"What an urgent lesson for the workers and freedom-loving people of all countries to learn! The moment any trade union falls into the hands of Communists, that organization is no longer a genuine union but only a pitiful caricature of a trade union, a sham and a fraud like Hitler's 'Labor-Front.' This holds true for Czechoslovakia no less than for Russia. This would hold just as true for every other country—America not excepted.

"Freedom-loving labor must never lose sight of the extraordinary and pernicious virus of Communism to destroy free trade union organization. If the free trade unions of the world do not rise to the full height of their labor organizations and pillars of human freedom, they will not only most make no concessions to or traffic to Communists and Communist-front organizations captured by Communists but also to the police agencies of a foreign power."

LLPE Officials Use Old Mansion For Hdqts.

The national headquarters of Labor's League for Political Education are being established in the historic Decatur House, across from the White House in Washington, D. C. The house, constructed in 1836, was once owned by Stephen Decatur and occupied as the British Embassy during his service as British Ambassador.

Joseph D. Keenan serves as assistant to AFL President William Green and General Meany, AFL secretary-treasurer, who are the top executive officers of the AFL's political arm. Mr. Keenan is on leave from the Chicago Federation of Labor, of which he is secretary.

Employment Down 275,000 In February; Number of Jobs Still 1,000,000 Over 1947

Washington.—Nonagricultural employment as of mid-February was down by about 275,000 to a total of 42,700,000, according to estimates released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Main reasons for the decline, the bureau said, were the severe winter weather, and gas and oil shortages which plagued certain areas of the nation. Despite these adverse factors, however, employment continued about 1,000,000 above the level for a year ago, the report declared.

Analyzing the BLS estimates, Ewan Clague, U. S. Commissioner of Labor Statistics, declared:

"Six significant signs of weakness or of any wavering of employment in the face of February's price uncertainties were revealed in the current employment reports. While there were some indications of increased caution by businessmen in making commitments, much of this appeared to be favorable for the long run. An important feature, although it cannot be measured, was the heightened tension in international affairs.

"With outdoor activity and some of the heavy goods industries limited to mark time during February, the number of persons actually at work and the number of man-hours put in on the job fell sharply.

"Construction and the automobile industry were the hardest hit during February, with employment, however, was above February a year ago by a margin considerably the February levels in the years just before the war. Similarly, automobile employment remained close, to the record level of 1 million jobs. The pre-Easter expansion in the textile and apparel industries brought employment in those fields to a new alltime high. There were 10 percent more jobs in the industries than a month ago and 2 percent more in the textile group.

"The general trend of unemployment so far this year has paralleled fairly closely the experience of 1947. Unemployment began to decline moderately in early March as weather conditions improved. Seasonal shortages made favorable for the long run. An important feature, although it cannot be measured, was the heightened tension in international affairs.

"With outdoor activity and some of the heavy goods industries limited to mark time during February, the number of persons actually at work and the number of man-hours put in on the job fell sharply.

Green Hits Move to Cut Social Security; Pending Bill Excludes 750,000 From Act

Washington.—AFL President William Green attacked a "joker" bill before Congress which, under the guise of maintaining the status quo with regard to social security benefits in would actually deprive 500,000 to 750,000 American workers of social security protection.

In a letter to Chairman Eugene D. Millikin of the Senate Finance Committee, Mr. Green requested the opportunity to present testimony against this legislation which has already passed the House and is now being considered by the Senate Finance Committee.

The bill referred to (H. J. Res. 296) was introduced by Representative Bertrand W. Gearhart of California. No opportunity was offered labor to present arguments against the bill when it was before the House Ways and Means Committee.

Mr. Green said that those who would be adversely affected by this measure include life insurance agents, taxicab drivers, owner-operators of trucks and buses, newspaper and newspaper vendors, industrial home workers employed on a contract basis and some mechanics in the building and construction trades who operate on a semicontract basis.

A dispute arose between the Social Security Administration and the Treasury Department more than 10 years ago as to whether these workers were included in the coverage of the act, Mr. Green explained. In 1947 the Supreme Court, in 3 cases, upheld the Social Security Administration's contention that such workers were covered under the act. Consequently the Treasury inserted a notice in the Federal Register that new regulations covering the contributions of these borderline employers and their employees were to be issued.

The Gearhart bill, Mr. Green charged, attempts to reverse the Supreme Court decisions by redefining the term "employee" as interpreted under the Social Security Act. This redefinition, he said, would effectively deny Social Security protection to approximately 750,000 persons now employed.

"At a time when our country should be taking action to increase and extend the benefits of our social security laws," Mr. Green declared, "enactment of this bill would actually prove a great step backward."

In his letter to Senator Millikin, Mr. Green added:

"The Social Security Advisory Council whose members you appointed in 1946 under Senate Resolution 141 is now engaged in a thorough examination of the social security program with special reference to the matter of coverage. I understand this council plans to present to you within the very near future its recommendations in an interim report dealing with the Old-age and Survivors Insurance portion of the program. The Congress will then have before it a program which will deal with the particular issue in a constructive manner."

AGE BARS EMPLOYMENT TO MANY, SURVEY SHOWS

Albany, N. Y.—Much of New York state's current unemployment is due to employers' age restrictions and to the lack of jobs for workers in many specialized skills, according to Edward Corsi, Industrial Commissioner for New York.

Special surveys in 7 cities revealed that many job seekers could not meet the age requirements of the employers. In Schenectady, for example, 40 percent of the persons registered with the state employment service were over 55 years of age. An additional 6.1 percent were under 21. Of those falling within the age brackets set by employers, few possessed the special skills or experience required for many of the jobs.

The percentages of job seekers in the "under 21" and "55 and over" age brackets in other cities was: Buffalo, 39.6; Elmira, 40.5; Rochester, 31.6; Syracuse, 30.3; and Utica, 29.6.

KANSAS STATE COLLEGE SETS LABOR-MANAGEMENT PARLEY

Manhattan, Kan.—Plans were announced for the second annual Labor-Management Round-Table conference to be held on the campus of Kansas State College here on April 9 and 10. The conference was arranged by the colleges and endorsed by labor and management groups. Its purposes are to bring labor and management together for joint discussion of their problems, and to promote public understanding of the problems and developments in the field of labor relations.

Representing the American Federation of Labor in the discussions will be F. D. Patterson, president of the Kansas State Federation of Labor; Walter Mason, secretary of the AFL's State, County, and Municipal Employees; and Carl Parrish, McPherson, secretary of the AFL Kansas City Building Trades Council.

AFL STEREOTYPERS UNION GAINS $15.50 PAY RAISE

New York.—Newspaper stereotypers, members of the International Union No. 1, an AFL affiliate, won a $15.50 weekly pay increase from newspaper publishers here.

The pay increase was incorporated in a new 2-year contract which includes the union shop in place of the closed shop formerly enjoyed by the union prior to the Taft-Hartley law. The wage increase in the agreement is retroactive to the first pay period.

The new contract makes the weekly pay scale to $84.50 as compared to the old scale of $69.

1,000 UNION CONTRACTS FILED WITH BLS IN FEB.

Washington.—Copies of more than 1,000 collective bargaining agreements were voluntarily submitted to the Bureau of Labor Statistics by employers and labor organizations during February, the Department of Labor announced.

Note to Editors

Mats for the photographs appearing in this edition are being mailed to you as an extra service rendered by the AFL Weekly News Service.

The two-column mat of the LLPE headquarters is being mailed under separate cover. The single-column mat for Mr. Keenan's picture is enclosed with the News Service.

Taft-Hartley Injunction Hits AFL Union; Atomic Unit's Arbitration Offer Spurned

Washington.—A prize example of gross injustice perpetrated under the Taft-Hartley Act was afforded the nation when the Department of Justice teamed with a recalcitrant corporation to obtain an injunction against the Atomic Trades and Labor Council, an AFL group representing a thousand workers at the atomic bomb laboratory at Oak Ridge, Tenn.

The injunction, issued by Federal Judge George C. Taylor at Knoxville, restrains the union workers for 80 days from quitting their jobs even though they had offered to arbitrate their dispute with the Carbide and Carbon Chemical Corporation, which operates the plant for the Federal Atomic Energy Commission.

The workers at the laboratory have a union contract with the Monsanto Chemical Corporation which formerly operated the plant. When the Carbide and Carbon Chemical Corporation recently took over operation, it sought to change provisions in the contract in order to make them conform with provisions in contracts with two other unions in other plants.

This would have meant, union officials charged, sharp reduction in seniority, skill leave benefits would be curtailed, vacation standards cut and cost of living differential in favor of laboratory workers which has been in effect traditionally because of the hazardous nature of their work, would be lost.

Union negotiators protested vigorously against these changes, but found the company stubbornly unwilling to negotiate or arbitrate the issues. At the request of the government, the union agreed not to strike and to maintain the status quo pending settlement by arbitration of the dispute, but these failed.

At that point, with threats of court injunctions in the air, the following statement was sent to President Truman by James A. Brownlow, secretary-treasurer of the AFL Trades Department and Kenneth Scott, representative of the Atomic Trades and Labor Council:

"The Atomic Trades and Labor Council, affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, hereby pledges itself and commits itself to maintain the status quo as now existing at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory X-10, operated by the Carbide and Carbon Chemical Corporation, Oak Ridge, Tenn., for the Atomic Energy Commission, and not to sponsor, support, aid or engage in any strike or stoppage of work interruption at such laboratory under such status quo. The foregoing for the entire period of time that an injunction could be issued under Section 206 through 212 of the Labor-Management Relations Act, 1947.

"The Council further agrees to comply with the provisions of such sections. Any responsibility for the necessity of an injunction rests solely upon the Carbide and Carbon Chemical Corporation and its refusal to negotiate or arbitrate.

"The union has repeatedly offered to arbitrate all issues which may be in dispute but to no avail. It makes this offer again. The failure of the Carbide and Carbon Chemical Corporation to yield to the same pledge and to the provisions of such sections, places the union in the unenviable position of facing an injunction forced gratuitously upon it by the company in spite of every effort to avoid it.

"Such action would be thoroughly unjust and unnecessary. If an injunction is sought, it should, in the interests of justice, be against the Carbide and Carbon Chemicals Corporation and not the union."

However, this plea fell on deaf ears. The following day the government went into Federal District Court at Knoxville and there invoked the "national emergency" provisions of the Taft-Hartley Act to head off a strike which was not threatened or imminent.

Assistant Attorney General J. M. Friedman appeared in his place in the court by J. H. Baker, jr., commissioner of labor relations, counsel for the union, told Judge Taylor:

"The union is offering here and now to arbitrate all of the controversies. We are willing to have the union, the union agree to that effect and we will abide by its findings."

Mr. Thatcher argued vigorously against the issuance of an injunction which he termed a "slap" at the union. He said, but the judge replied:

Union officials immediately said they would comply with the court order which said that continued production at the plant is highly desirable in the interest of preparedness for national defense.

Mr. Scott told reporters that the AFL atomic union would wait out the next 80 days". "We will not negotiate or bargain privileges we by collective bargaining," he said. "They are not ours to trade them away."

Meanwhile, moves were initiated on Capitol Hill to forbid by new legislation any strikes by workers at atomic bomb plants. It was presumed that this proposed legislation would establish compulsory arbitration for peaceful settlement of disputes by negotiation and arbitration.

ITU Claims Lockout By N. Y. Print Shops

New York.—It took the Taft-Hartley law to bring about the first work stoppage in 29 years in any of this city's magazine, book, and job printing shops.

Members of Local 6 of the AFL's International Typographical Union quit work in what the union characterized as a lockout.

The work stoppage resulted after the union refused to agree to a ruling by the employers of notices lengthening the work week from 36½ hours to 40 hours at straight time pay.

The "lockout" came during contract negotiations carried on by the union and employers under the numerous restrictive and hampering provisions of the Taft-Hartley law, which has made the bargaining talks difficult and unproductive to date.

The questions of wages, hours and working conditions have been settled by the conferees although a contract has been reached which, according to Woodruff Randolph, president of the union, seeks also an end to "no-contract" policy so far as possible under the Taft-Hartley law.

Past labor management relations in the city's $1,000,000,000-a-year commercial printing industry have been so satisfactory that the threatened strike took place in 1906. In 1919 the union conducted a one-week "token" strike in an unsuccessful effort to establish the 40-hour week. The strike did bring the 45-hour standard of eight workers, but day workers did not go on a 40-hour basis until 1922.

Two years ago the employers signed contracts shortening the work week to 36½ hours.

Association Honors Memory of Furuseth

New York.—The 94th birthday anniversary of the late Andrew Furuseth, father of the LaFollette Seaman's Act, passed by Congress in 1915, was celebrated recently by the Friends of Andrew Furuseth Legislative Association.

In connection with the observance, Silas B. Axtell, counsel and one of the founders of the association, announced that plans were being made for a move to have a library or room at all Seamen's Union buildings dedicated to the memory of Mr. Furuseth. He said that a bust or book on the "Life and Work of Andrew Furuseth" would soon be placed in the general distribution.

Mr. Furuseth, frequently called the Abraham Lincoln of the sea, died in Seattle, Wash., on March 26, 1938. His body laid in state in the Seamen's Union of America headquarters building, an honor accorded to no other labor leader in America.

AFL AUTO WORKERS WIN BARGAINING ELECTION

Sprink Lake, Mich.—Employes of the Burnside Manufacturing Co. here voted for the AFL's United Automobile Workers as exclusive collective bargaining negotiations with the company.

The landslide vote of 5-to-1 in favor of the union climaxed an organizing campaign conducted by UAW representatives.

The new bargaining unit has been chartered as UAW Local 672.

Ballots Defend Your Freedom

BE SURE TO VOTE THIS YEAR AND EVERY YEAR

Green Endorses Bond Drive As Aid In Curbing Inflation

Washington.—AFL President William Green wholeheartedly endorsed the forthcoming United States Savings Bonds campaign of the Treasury Department in April to stimulate the sale of U. S. Savings Bonds.

Speaking at a 3-day conference called by Treasury officials to discuss the campaign, Mr. Green said that it is the duty of all to protect and strengthen the home front in order that America can remain powerful enough to halt the aggressive designs of Soviet dictatorship and prevent war from engulfing our world.

The second of the Treasury Department show the vast extent of labor's participation in the War Bond drives and the huge amounts which American workers made available to them through the purchases of those bonds.

I am calling upon the eight million members of the American Federation of Labor to show the world that we can do it again, that we can and will, gladly to the extent of our ability, support to the limit of our American foreign policy with every dollar we can spare from our home needs and obligations."

OVER A MILLION WOMEN IN SELF-EMPLOYMENT

Washington.—Over a million women in the United States were working part time on their own account in retail trade for profit or fees in October, 1947, according to the Census Bureau studies. In addition nearly 300,000 women were operating farms of their own.

The entire group of self-employed women constituted nearly one-fifth of employed women. Other women at work constituted nearly one out of every three workers.

ILGWU SECRETARY ON "VOICE OF AMERICA"

New York.—Luigi Antonini, general secretary of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, delivered the main address on the first of a series of "Voice of America" broadcasts beamed to Italy.

The new series of broadcasts are designed to give Italian listeners a picture of life in America. They are timed to precede the Italian elections scheduled for April 18, when the Communists will make a strong bid for power.

In addition to newscasts, music and other features, the programs will include talks by prominent Italian-Americans from business, labor, educational and agricultural circles. There will be 5 broadcasts by Italian-American housewives.

AFL CHEMICAL UNION WINS PAY HIKE, EQUAL PAY CLAUSE

Los Angeles.—The AFL's International Chemical Workers Union announced ratification of a union agreement with the Southern Counties Gas Co. of California providing for an average 12-cent-an-hour increase in pay for about 1,500 employees.

In addition to the wage increase, which is retroactive to February 1, the new contract provides $56,000 annually for necessary readjustment of wage rates. It also authorizes to provide equal pay for equal work, with the determination on the basis of seniority.

PRESIDENT LOSES HOPE FOR ANTI-INFLATION BILL

Washington. — President Truman has given up hope that Congress will take any steps to enact his anti-inflation program, it was said.

This was evident from a letter addressed to the administrative assistants of the National Federation of Post Office Clerks by Donald R. Dawson, administrative assistant to the President.

Mr. Dawson wrote that Mr. Truman "appreciates the constructive information and viewpoint you have presented to him and that he will take it into consideration in dealing with the problem of pay for federal employees as it seems more evident as each day passes that his anti-inflation program will not be enacted into law."

Where Do You Stand?

How do you regard the Taft-Hartley Act?
Are you for it or against it?

Recently, Senator Robert A. Taft and other supporters of this legislation have been making speeches to tell the public believe that the Taft-Hartley Act is opposed only by labor leaders and that the rank and file of labor union members are really in favor of it.

We think the public ought to know the truth.

That is why we are conducting this nation-wide poll.

This is an entirely secret ballot. We want you to express your honest opinion with perfect freedom. All you have to do is to place a check in the box beside either of the two questions below and mail the clipping to Poll Department, American Federation of Labor, Washington, D. C.

I am for the Taft-Hartley Act ☐

I am against the Taft-Hartley Act ☐

Please mark your ballot above and mail to Poll Department, American Federation of Labor, Washington, D. C.

Note to Editors:—Labor's own poll has been designed to find out whether there is any basis for the claim that union members are in favor of the Taft-Hartley Act. Editors are requested to give wide publicity to the poll and urge their readers to participate in the balloting.

AFL TEACHERS RATIFY $40 MONTHLY PAY HIKE

Minneapolis.—Acceptance of proposed higher salary scales by AFL teachers here paved the way for the resumption of classes for 78,000 idle students.

Under terms of an agreement 2,000 teachers will receive increases of $40 a month for the balance of the year and will have the opportunity of making up about half of the time lost because of the dispute over the pay question.

The Board of Education also agreed to give up its plan to shorten the school year as an economy measure.

The agreement also provides that beginning next year teachers will be available for an extra week's service "to be used in professional preparation and planning prior to regular opening of the schools in September."

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

SUPPLEMENT

WILLIAM GREEN, President — WASHINGTON, D. C., FRIDAY, MARCH 26, 1948 — GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer

The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accounts and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor occurring in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

LABOR'S GOAL! To Repeal Taft-Hartley Law

Collective Bargaining

By GEORGE M. HARRISON
President, Brotherhood of Railway Clerks

The following are excerpts from a speech delivered by Mr. George Harrison, AFL Executive Council member and president of the Brotherhood of Railway Clerks, at the Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations at the University of Illinois.

The immediate objective of collective bargaining by working people stated in its narrow and limited definition is—"the promotion of the well-being of the workers"—but its broader and more profound purpose is to provide a democratic force within industry to arrive at a fair division of the fruits of the joint efforts of workers and owners, and to settle their differences amicably. In short, to establish for workers eitizenship in industry.

Labor unions come into being because employes feel that their economic needs can be met and the hours and conditions under which they work can be made tolerable only by the workers themselves having a voice in determining what their wages and working conditions should be, and they are unable as individuals to cope with this problem.

Employer Opposition

It is unfortunate that so many labor unions have their genesis in a climate of employer opposition. The resistance of employers to the efforts of their employes to organize—by discrimination, discharge, spying and coercion, and, when asked to treat with the union, by stalling and every other conceivable discouragement—creates an atmosphere of distrust and resentment that will long endure. In these cases the employer has finally determined to deal with the union, the climate is not conducive to the healthy growth of collective bargaining because of the great hostility that has been generated"in the minds of the employes.

With some notable exceptions ,the trade union movement in the United States has had to devote the major part of its time and efforts to maintain its existence against the violent opposition of employers. Had the unions been recognized as legitimate agencies for the advancement of labor's welfare and the elevation of the living standards of wage earners, had such unions instead of fighting to maintain themselves had this time to devote to perfecting the devices of bargaining collectively we would today be well along the road to establishing democracy in industry. Time lost in such thinking is the best guarantee for the preservation of democracy in government.

Effective collective bargaining can be achieved only where mutual confidence has been established in the good faith of the parties. The members of the union as well as its representatives must feel that the employer has fully accepted the union and sincerely desires to deal fairly and sympathetically with the problems of the employes. The employer in turn must feel that the labor union is a necessary part of his operations and with which he should cooperate.

If the union is accepted on that basis ,the employer will find that the union soon becomes an agency through which he can enjoy the cooperation necessary to the solution of his problems of production, improved quality of workmanship and lower costs.

Day-to-Day-Relations

Most important in the development of a working relationship is the development of effective and efficient machinery for the prompt handling and fair settlement of grievances arising out of the day-to-day employer-employe relations and disagreements or misunderstandings that arise out of the application of the agreement flaying working conditions, hours and wages. As a last resort, this machinery should provide for arbitration of such cases when a settlement cannot be reached in direct negotiation. This is most important, and the presence or absence in the collective labor agreement may be viewed as a test of the good faith of both parties and the degree to which they subscribe to the document.

If these day-to-day human relations are to be properly handled and the morale of the employes is to be maintained at its highest level, representatives of the union must be permitted to have access to the employes at the machine, or bench, or desk where they work for the purpose of learning the facts in any case about which they are concerned and to counsel and advise them. The presence of the union's representative in the plant must be acknowledged and accepted as necessary to the handling of day-to-day problems. This is essential to the development of wholesome union-employe relationships.

Prosperity of Industry

When collective bargaining has reached this degree of acceptance by the employer, the prosperity of the industry becomes of direct concern to the union and its members, for their well-being then becomes identified with the well-being of the employer. The union representatives are then ready and able accept opportunities of cooperating with the company to improve its service or its product, to increase production, and to eliminate waste. Self-interest will impel the union to seek to improve the financial health of the company.

The interest of the union in the economic well-being of the company must be encouraged by the employer, however. Any indication on his part that changes in operations are made with disregard of the welfare of the union will simply stifle their cooperation. The employer must show a readiness to discuss freely and fully with the union representatives all proposed changes in operation that affect the welfare of the employes, and be willing to receive and earnestly consider suggestions to minimize or avoid the imposition of hardships and burdens on the employes. The introduction of any change that displaces a number of men need not be followed by an immediate reduction in the force. It is not expecting too much of the corporation that it postpone the day when it begins to realise the savings contemplated. The union may, in justice, seek to have a share of savings to be realized from the change in the operations set aside to cushion the impact upon the employes adversely affected. The attrition in the working force of most any plant, by reason of normal causes such as retirement, resignations and deaths, will within a reasonable time so contract the labor force as to meet the new condition without any employe being made to assume the burden for the employer to get immediate gains. Moreover, the financial reserves set aside by industry must be viewed not only as a hedge against the future to protect the interest of stock and bond holders; they must also be viewed as a hedge against the future to protect the interests of employes.

Since workers cannot limit their plan of living or restrict the obligations to their families to a day-to-day or month-to-month basis, both management and labor will find it beneficial in those cases, where the nature of the industry will permit, to set up a plan providing for a reasonable guarantee of annual employment. Regularity and continuing employment reduces labor turnover and increases efficiency on the one hand, and on the other, wage rates are reasonable, provides the steady income essential to maintain acceptable living standards of health and decency plus a margin for emergencies.

Industrial Democracy

Collective bargaining is a democratic instrument. It is the agency through which workers have a voice in determining their own well-being. The extent to which trade unions are successful in improving the economic and social well-being of the workers will determine the extent to which they will seek to exploit the power of government to solve these problems.

In a democracy the government is presumed to be responsive to the will of the people and they will inevitably use its powers to serve their needs. But if other self-help instruments closer at hand should fail. It is therefore essential that labor unions be powerful enough to do a good job of improving the economic status of the workers. If they fail, either through any fault of their own, or because they are too weakened by the opposition of employers, or by repressive laws enacted by a reactionary government, they will turn to the ballot, the instrument of political democracy, to secure a liberal government that will solve their problems through the enactment of helpful legislation.

Danger of Inflation

With prices rising and purchasing power declining, the real danger that faces us, in my opinion, is ruinous deflation rather than inflation—deflation resulting from the inability of the masses of wage and salary earners to buy the goods and services produced.

While un-employment insurance payments may prevent some suffering and poverty for a depression, they will increase, and strike against, them will not be adequate to prevent discontent and a demand for governmental action. This demand may very well take the form of governmental control or operation. Private enterprise, we believe, can be more efficient than government, but if scarcity, monopoly and depressions are to be the price the people must pay for private enterprise, there is danger many may come to think the price is too high and that, in the balance, the sacrifice of some efficiency through government control or operation would be cheaper. If industry will respond by halting its warfare on unions; if it will cease its efforts to weaken the labor movement by repressive laws, and labor is free to balance purchasing power with our productive resources, the extreme fluctuations of the business cycle can be eliminated; suffering and hardship of the people can be prevented and private enterprise can be secured within the foreseeable future.

Retail Food Prices Stay At High Level; February Slump Had Little Real Effect

Washington.—Retail food prices have stabilized at levels only about 2% percent below the high peak recorded during January despite the highly publicized price break which took place on the nation's primary markets in early February.

This was the conclusion to be drawn from a report released by the Bureau of Labor statistics which showed that retail prices declined only slightly after the price slump and have showed little change during the period from mid-February to mid-March.

The BLS report on retail prices was based upon a telegraphic survey of 12 representative cities.

Meanwhile, retail prices for other goods and services continued their upward advance, the BLS declared. The bureau's consumer price index for mid-February was 167.5 percent of the 1935-39 average, eight-tenths of 1 percent below the record peak of January.

Retail price increases between January and February were reported for almost all groups except food. Recent changes in wholesale prices in most lines, the bureau said, are a little indication of imminent declines.

The 2.4 percent decrease in retail food prices was partly offset by'a 1.6 percent increase in the retail prices of apparel and fractional increases in household furnishings, fuel, electricity, ice and rent.

The bureau's comprehensive wholesale price index for February, reflecting the full amount of the drop in agricultural prices, was 160.7 percent of the 1926 average. The index was 3 percent below the postwar peak of January and slightly above the level of last November.

Ewan Clague, chief of the BLS, pointed out that' ordinarily primary market price trends indicated the direction which retail prices would take in the future.

The most recent information available on general primary market prices is the bureau's weekly index for the week ended March 20. That index now stands at 161.5 percent higher than in the week ended March 13.

However, the comprehensive index is almost 2 percent lower than it was at the start of the year, mostly as a result of the February drop in agriculture markets.

AFL Fights Crippling of TVA Project; Asks Congress to Reject McKellar Plan

Washington. — The American Federation of Labor charged that amendments proposed by Senator Kenneth McKellar to the Tennessee Valley Authority Act are so drastic in scope as to "imply the intention to cripple in order to destroy."

Walter J. Mason, national legislative representative for the AFL, defended the TVA before the Senate Public Works Committee and urged the rejection of the McKellar amendments to the basic legislation which created the flood control, conservation, and power project.

Senator McKellar, a bitter foe of the TVA, has made a relentless drive year in and year out to hamstring and destroy the project.

Mason defended the structure of the TVA, which is organized along regional lines, for the purpose of promoting the development of an area comprising parts of several states. He said:

"The American Federation of Labor believes that the present structure is admirably organized to carry out this purpose, which is social as well as national in scope."

The AFL spokesman declared the proposed amendments would destroy the regional character of the project and bring through the splitting of the board which administers the TVA program, jeopardize the program by making it susceptible to partisan political influences. He said:

"Senator McKellar's proposals to amend the organic act would begin by scrapping the board which has functioned so well. At present the board serves as the over-all policy-making body and reviews results. It has an executive manager responsible for operation. The proposed amendments would disqualify present board members and would reduce the board members from 9 to 4 years and by shortening the term it would increase opportunities for political influence. It would be impossible that men of broad statesmanlike vision would be appointed as board members.

"The amendment furthermore assigns administrative duties to board members which would provide concentration on policies and planning for social advancement of the region. The McKellar bill would also require the Authority to abandon its present form of operating and conform to the governmental requirements of the General Accounting Office. It would require that its earnings into the U. S. Treasury instead of using them in more services, for the regional TVA area, and depend upon appropriations and would be compelled to observe partisan political control. It would be forbidden to operate experimental plants or to conduct experimental research or investigation. There would be no incentive for TVA to seek an opportunity for the experimentation necessary for sustained progress.

"These amendments strike so drastically at provisions which enabled TVA to accomplish many things that the intention to cripple in order to destroy. The amendments would serve no sound purpose. We urge rejection in order that TVA can continue its constructive work and become a keystone in the emergency plans our nation must assume."

Construction Trades Unions Praised By Business Leader

Cleveland.—Another top executive in the industrial world departed from the usual business "line" and issued a statement in praise of labor unions.

O. F. Sieder, executive vice-president of the H. K. Ferguson Company, one of the world's largest builders of factories and power plants, in a message to the company's employes declared openly that "we are happy with our union relations, which go back for many years in almost all parts of the country."

The Ferguson company has for decades maintained agreements with various AFL building trades unions covering its over 5,000 employees.

"In these days when it seems to be fashionable to attack unions, we want to go on record with a few facts," the company's message said. Here are the facts it listed:

"1. That the future success of the skills this country needs to continue the building of our national industrial plants.

"2. They have helped establish high standards of skill in the construction industry.

"3. They have helped to promote America's high standard of living—one of the highest standards of the world.

"4. They are a partner with management in keeping America industrially strong and, therefore, and to-be free in a troubled world."

Then the company added that "we're all on the same team and have the same goal."

Herbert Bittner, secretary-treasurer of the A. F of L. Building Trades Department, voiced pleasure at the statement.

"Naturally, we appreciate the company's fine stand, and we can assure the management it's mutual," he said. "The fact is, we have had many excellent relations with most corporations in the construction field.

"If all managements took the same position, industrial strife would practically disappear in this country, and we would have an era of peace from which labor, industry and the public would benefit enormously."

HINES SEES LABOR LAW STIMULATING DISUNITY

Reading, Pa.—Lewis G. Hines, AFL national legislative representative, blasted the Taft-Hartley law and declared it was foisted on the American people by the National Association of Manufacturers which represents the big business interests of the nation.

Hines was the principal speaker at a dinner meeting which concluded a 2-day educational institute held on the campus of Albright College here under the auspices of the Conference of Pennsylvania Central Labor Unions.

The AFL spokesman said the general public has been victimized by the propaganda barrage laid down by the NAM and other anti-labor organizations. He charged that the law has created disunity in the nation at a time when the menace of communism demands unified action by all groups to preserve democracy.

McCOMB PROPOSES NEW FLSA RECORDS PROVISIONS

Washington.—William R. McComb, Administrator of the Wage and Hour and Public Contracts Division, U. S. Department of Labor, has made a proposed amendment to the Fair Labor Standards Act record-keeping regulations which would require employers to keep for only three years certain records now required to be kept for four years.

Employers now are required to keep basic records for a time equal to the similar working records, for two years. This provision is unchanged.

The proposal with respect to the other records was made in the light of the Portal-to-Portal Act, which establishes a two-year federal statute of limitations applying to suits for back wages under the Wage and Hour Law, and would be in line with the general federal statute which sets a three-year period for commencing criminal actions.

AFL EXHIBIT PLANNED FOR BIG UNION SHOW

Washington.—The American Federation of Labor announced plans for its participation in the Union-Industries Show to be held in Milwaukee from May 12 to 16.

AFL President William Green said the services of a professional designer have been engaged to plan and construct the AFL exhibit which will cover over 2,000 square feet on the floor of the auditorium.

The purpose of the exhibit will be to focus the attention of the public on the various activities and accomplishments of the AFL in the fields of organization, legislation, social security, education, research, and public relations.

Action on Palestine Opposed by Green

Washington. — President William Green of the American Federation of Labor cabled a message to the Palestine Federation of Labor in which he expressed disagreement with the United States government's new policy toward Palestine.

In the message to Joseph Sprinzak, General Secretary of the General Federation of Jewish Labor in Telaviv, Mr. Green said that the American Federation of Labor would urge that the United States return to its original position in support of the partition of Palestine into Jewish and Arab states.

The text of the cablegram follows:

"We share your expressed feeling of disappointment and resentment that took place on part of our government: abandonment of United Nations plan of Palestine. We accepted action of United Nations to partition Palestine as final and definite. As a result we concentrated our efforts toward preparing upon United Nations to make effective its decision, to make, and there by answer to challenge of Arab states by resorting to force. It was not necessary in order to carry decision of United Nations into effect.

"Notwithstanding the fact that our own government has changed its attitude, we will continue our efforts to prevail upon said government to modify its position and support original decision of United Nations."

Railway League Blasts Wallace

Washington.—The political league organized by the railway labor organizations disclaimed any connection with candidacy of Henry A. Wallace for President of the United States.

Referring to Wallace's move, the league declaration said he "and his Communist associates are asking the workers of America to assist in cutting their own throats."

The statement added: "We have in mind the declaration by Wallace and his 'Red' advisers that they will not support any candidate for President, however good his record may be, if he agrees to vote for the Marshall Plan.

"Now it happens that a large branch of organized labor have endorsed that plan and that a majority of the members of both parties in House and Senate are in favor of it.

"Most progressives have supported it, and now Wallace and his 'Red' musketeers insist they will do what they can to defeat these progressives. Of course, on the other hand, if a reactionary opposes the Marshall Plan, Wallace and his 'Red' supporters will back that candidate."

Industry Draft Held Necessary

Milwaukee.—The inclusion in any legislation drafting manpower or requiring peacetime military service, of a requirement that industry will also be drafted in time of war, was urged by Lewis Merrill, vice-president of the AFL's United Auto Workers.

The union leader presented his views in an open telegram to Senator Chan Gurney, chairman of the Senate Armed Forces Committee.

Washburn's provision would require industry to produce war materials without profit in the event of any armed conflict between this country and any other.

The UAW-AFL head termed "unsound and disgraceful" a recurrence of "any future war of the profiteering industry as illustrated during World Wars I and II."

He indicated that the sacrifice made by individuals called in the draft either in the postponement or education of these Americans, would be the financial loss to families of those who are made, at stake to "get less somewhat matched by industry in foregoing any profits to be made out of war."

Costly congressional investigations of wartime profits and postwar scandals could be prevented by doing away with wartime profits in the first place, Washburn believes, or in

"During any war our country has far too much at stake to permit any individual or group to profit" from such a national calamity. Profits should be entirely divorced from any war effort by every class of our citizenry."

Congress Extends Rent Control for Year; Rejects Autonomy for Local Rent Boards

Washington.—Congress approved and sent to President Truman a compromise measure extending rent control in modified form until March 31, 1949.

In place of the provision in the House bill which would have given local boards power to determine whether rent control should be continued, the compromise version established a new federal court to review disputed cases and render a final decision.

The American Federation of Labor approved the grant of arbitrary power to local rent boards on grounds it would mean the virtual end to effective controls.

The measure adopted provides that the Emergency Court of Appeals, established in the Price Control Act of 1942, review fully the evidence of both sides in cases where the Expediter rejects the recommendations submitted by the local boards.

The court, made up of three or more federal judges named by the Chief Justice of the United States, would automatically receive the challenged recommendations. It would be required to uphold recommendations based upon "adequate and substantial evidence" and support the expediter if it found that "not of sufficient weight."

The measure stipulates that the 665 local boards must conduct public hearings and give appropriate advance notice of them before arriving at any recommendations.

Other provisions governing some 50,000,000 persons living in 13,000,000 dwellings under federal rent control, the law says:

Landlords and tenants may enter into "voluntary" leases extending at least through Dec. 31, 1949, and permitting rent increases of up to 15 per cent.

Units operating under similar leases, under provisions of existing law, would be "frozen" at the stipulated rentals without any pyramiding of an additional 15 per cent for the duration of the extension.

Units operating under existing "voluntary" leases, that became free from controls through vacancy between Jan. 1 and the effective date of the extension, would remain uncontrolled.

Nonhouskeeping furnished rooms in private homes lodging one or two paying guests would be removed from controls.

It was made clear that it was the intent of Congress that most hotel accommodations were to be removed from controls if customary hotel services were made available, even if not used.

Except for nonpayment or creation of a nuisance, a 60-day notice would be required for eviction. Evictions would also be possible for dwelling alterations, occupancy by a landlord's immediate family or the intention to withdraw the property from the rental market.

To combat the "cooperative housing racket" in metropolitan areas, it was provided that 65 per cent of the stock in proposed co-operative apartments had to be held by tenants and occupants.

Air Line Pilots Association Charges Company Refused to Abide by Law

Chicago. The AFL's Air Line Pilots Association charged the strike-bound National Airlines Co. with refusal to abide by the provisions of the Railway Labor Act, and with attempts to avoid compliance with the legislation which governs the nation's railway and air line companies.

The charges were contained in a formal petition filed with the Civil Aeronautics Board urging the board to force the company to comply with the law or face suspension of its license by the government.

David L. Behncke, president of the ALPA, said the filing of the petition is a "test of whether a man is bigger than the law, or the law is bigger than the man."

Several incidents, which the ALPA petition said is exemplary of National Airlines' attitude, were contained in the petition.

One of these was a company generated threat of a three-page-a-day meeting with the National Mediation Board in Washington on February 7, when G. T. Baker withdrew a previously extended settlement offer, while still simultaneously he announced in the press that he had discharged all his pilots and proceeded to advertise in the daily papers for persons to fill the places of the striking pilots, in an effort to break the strike.

Since the February 7 meeting, Mr. Behncke has gone on record with the statement that the pilots would have been satisfactory to the pilots and probably would have ended the strike at that time, only four days after it had started.

Another incident cited in the petition was a picket line conservation and harassment on one of the striking pilots on February 28, 1948.

In that case, the pilots' complaint to the CAB points out, Mr. Baker appeared at the picket line of the striking pilots on March 28, and stated that he would spend every dime of the company's money rather than take cognizance of the striking pilots and Captain Maston O'Neal, the pilot who had notified grievances concerning the strike, back with the company.

The strike of the National Airlines pilots, the longest in the history of the air line industry, was called on February 3 at which time the Air Line Pilots Association declared it was "the inevitable climax of two years of notoriously poor labor-management relations on the air line" and that the pilots and the contesting organization had spent two years and four months of fruitless attempts to avoid the strike.

At the time of the walkout, the pilots were flying under a stand-by arrangement which had postponed the original strike date of November 12, 1947, to give the National Mediation Board a chance to exercise its mediation in the daily papers for persons to fill the places of the striking pilots, in an effort to break the strike.

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Where Do You Stand?

How do you regard the Taft-Hartley Act?
Are you for it or against it?

Recently, Senator Robert A. Taft and other supporters of this legislation have been making speeches trying to make the public believe that the Taft-Hartley Act is opposed only by labor leaders and that the rank and file of labor union members are really in favor of it.

We think the public ought to know the truth.

That is why we are conducting this nation-wide poll.

This is an entirely secret ballot. We want you to express your honest opinion with perfect freedom. All you have to do is to place a check in the box beside either of the two questions below and mail the clipping to Poll Department, American Federation of Labor, Washington, D. C.

I am for the Taft-Hartley Act ☐

I am against the Taft-Hartley Act ☐

Please mark your ballot above and mail to Poll Department, American Federation of Labor, Washington, D. C.

Note to Editors:—Labor's own poll has been designed to find out whether there is any basis for the claim that union members are in favor of the Taft-Hartley law. Editors are requested to give wide publicity to the poll and urge their readers to participate in the balloting.

UNANIMOUS VOTE APPROVES BARGAINING BY AFL UNION

Cambridge, Mass.—Results of an election here among employes of the Anderson Engineering Company show the confidence of American workers in AFL trade unions.

Not a single "no-union" vote was recorded in the election held to determine whether the workers employed by the company wished to be represented by the AFL in bargaining relationships with the employer.

FEBRUARY INDUSTRIAL OUTPUT AT RECORD RATE

Washington.—America's industrial production rolled along at the highest rate in peacetime history during February despite bad weather, the Federal Reserve Board reported. Output of the nation's factories and mines was 93 percent above the 1935-39 average on the board's seasonally adjusted index of production.